projects involving an expenditure of about Rs. 54,014 crore during 2008-09 (till date) for implementation. These include 42 projects in highways sector involving an expenditure of about Rs. 52,944 crore and 2 projects in ports sector involving an expenditure of about Rs. 1,070 crore.

(c) Does not arise.

Increase in economic disparity

†1958. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the continuous increase in the economic disparity in the country is being witnessed these days;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether it is necessary to increase the income at lower level to reduce this disparity;

(d) if so, the Government's reaction thereto and whether it is necessary to amend the economic policy for this purpose; and

(e) if so, the future plan of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) and (b) Based on the information available from the household Consumer Expenditure Survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation of Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, the extent of inequality in the distribution of per capita consumption, measured by Lorenz ratio for the year 2004-05 was 0.30 for the rural areas and 0.37 for the urban areas. The corresponding Lorenz ratios for the year 1993-94 were 0.28 and 0.34 for rural and urban areas respectively, indicating a marginal widening of economic disparity based on per capita consumption expenditure during the period.

(c) to (e) A proportionately higher increase in the income/consumption of the people at the lower level of income distribution is able to reduce the economic disparity. In order to achieve this, the Eleventh Five Year Plan aims at faster and inclusive development. The central vision of the Eleventh Plan is to trigger a development process, which ensures broad based improvement in the quality of life of the people, especially the poor, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, minorities, etc. For this, the Eleventh Five Year Plan has set the growth target for the economy at 9% per year for the Plan period (2007-12) and aims at putting the economy on a sustainable growth trajectory with a growth of approximately 10% by the end of its period. The Eleventh Plan has also formulated a number of programmes to benefit the people at the lower end of the income distribution.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.